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APPLICATION NO	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO
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EXAMINER	
AUGHENBAUGH, WALTER	

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
1772	

DATE MAILED: 06/02/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/085,890	LUCAS ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Walter B Aughenbaugh	1772	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1)☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on *12 March 2004*.

2a)☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b)☐ This action is non-final.

3)☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4)☒ Claim(s) *1,2,4-11 and 17-19* is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6)☒ Claim(s) *1,2,4-11 and 17-19* is/are rejected.

7)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8)☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9)☒ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10)☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a)☐ accepted or b)☐ objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11)☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12)☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a)☐ All b)☐ Some * c)☐ None of:

1.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

2.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.

3.☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6) ☐ Other. _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Acknowledgement of Applicant's Amendments

1. The amendments made in claims 1, 2, 4-11, 17 and 18 in the Amendment filed March 12, 2004 (Amdt. D) have been received and considered by Examiner.

2. New claim 19 presented in Amdt. D has been received and considered by Examiner.

WITHDRAWN REJECTIONS

3. The 35 U.S C. 112, second paragraph rejection of claims 1, 5 and 8-10 made of record in paragraph 10 of Paper 11 has been withdrawn due to Applicant's amendments made in claims 1, 5 and 8-10 in Amdt. D.

4. The 35 U.S.C. 103(a) rejections of claims 1, 2, 4-11, 17 and 18 made of record in paragraphs 11 and 12 of Paper 11 have been withdrawn due to the amendments made in claims 1, 2, 4-11, 17 and 18 in Amdt. D

REPEATED OBJECTIONS

5. The objection to the specification made of record in paragraph 6 of Paper 11 has been repeated for the reasons previously made of record. Applicant's arguments on page 7 of Admt. D have been considered, but the specification is objected to because the specification does not provide support for the subject matter claimed in claims 1 and 18 that was identified in paragraph 6 of Paper 11.

REPEATED REJECTIONS

6. The 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph rejection of claims 1 and 18 made of record in paragraph 8 of Paper 11 has been repeated for the reasons previously made of record in paragraph 8 of Paper 11. In regard to claim 1, Applicant argues that an "increase or decrease of

0.2 on either side of this range is not new matter" on page 7 of Amdt. D because one skilled in the art would consider what Applicant calls "this slight broadening of the range" to be "inherently supported in the original disclosure", but an expansion of the pH range of 10.5-10.8 to 10.3-11.0 is not inherently supported in the original disclosure because the 10.3-11.0 range is not explicitly supported and because there is no indication in the specification that pH values inside of the 10.3-11.0 range but outside of the 10.5-10.8 are suitable for Applicant's invention: Applicant argues that there is criticality to the pH range of the invention on page 9 of Amdt. D, but the specification discloses a range of 10.5-10.8, so the range of 10.5-10.8 must be the critical range as Applicant has presented the invention in the specification. In regard to claim 18, Applicant cites the term "surfactant" that appears on page 1 of the specification in the background section on page 7 of Amdt. D, but the term "surfactant" is mentioned in regard to the coagulation dip process and Applicant states on page 2 that a coagulation step is not included in the straight dip process of the instant invention, so the term "surfactant" that appears on page 1 of the specification in the background section does not provide support for a surfactant in the emulsion of Applicant's invention.

7. The 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph rejection of claims 4 and 7 made of record in paragraph 10 of Paper 11 has been repeated for the reasons previously made of record in paragraph 10 of Paper 11: claims 4 and 7 end with "100 parts of polyisoprene": insert "by weight" in the "100 parts of polyisoprene" recitation as the first "100 parts of polyisoprene" recitation of claims 4 and 7 were amended in Amdt. D.

NEW REJECTIONS

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

8. Claims 11 and 19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. Claim 11 recites the limitation "said article": there is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim. N.B. Stevenson et al. teach that the article is intended for skin contact and that the material is shaped into contraceptives (col. 3, lines 13-25): a condom is a contraceptive. The term "thin" in claim 19 is a relative term which renders the claim indefinite. The term "thin" is not defined by the claim, the specification does not provide a standard for ascertaining the requisite degree, and one of ordinary skill in the art would not be reasonably apprised of the scope of the invention. Claim 19 recites the limitation "the composition of claim 1": there is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

9. Claims 1, 2, 4, 5, 9, 10 and 17-19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Stevenson et al. (U.S. 5,254,635) in further view of Hirai et al., and in further view of Grollier et al.

Stevenson et al. teach a liquid polyisoprene latex emulsion comprising a liquid latex (col. 5, lines 6-12), sulfur (col. 4, lines 35-37), a thiuram compound (col. 3, lines 65-66) and a dihydrocarbyl xanthogen polysulfide (corresponding to the xanthogen compound as claimed) as a rubber-curing agent (col. 4, lines 3-7). Since Stevenson et al. teach that the rubber that is used, which is preferably synthetic polyisoprene, may be in latex or dry form (col. 5, lines 6-12), the latex taught by Stevenson is a liquid polyisoprene latex emulsion.

Stevenson et al fail to explicitly teach that the liquid polyisoprene latex emulsion is stable, that the liquid polyisoprene latex emulsion has a pH of between 10.3 and 11.0 and that the liquid polyisoprene latex emulsion comprises ethoxylated cetyl/stearyl alcohol.

Hirai et al., however, disclose a stable liquid polyisoprene latex emulsion (col. 2, lines 19-24) comprising an emulsifying agent (col. 5, lines 56-59) and having a pH between 8 and 13.5 (Hirai et al. disclose that the emulsion is stable between pH 8 and 13.5) (col. 6, lines 7-9). Furthermore, Grollier et al. disclose a composition comprising an anionic polyisoprene latice (the liquid latex as claimed) (col. 1, lines 61-63, col. 2, lines 13-18 and col. 21, lines 57-59) and an oxyethyleneated cetyl-stearyl alcohol (corresponding to the ethoxylated cetyl/stearyl alcohol as claimed) (col. 14, lines 6-7). Grollier et al. disclose that emulsifying agents may be added to the composition of Grollier et al. (col. 11, line 35) Ethoxylated cetyl/stearyl alcohol is an emulsifying agent as evidenced by Watkins et al (see col. 4, lines 14-18 of Watkins et al.).

Therefore, one of ordinary skill in the art would have recognized to have maintained the polyisoprene latex emulsion of Stevenson et al. at a pH of between pH 8 and 13.5, a range that overlaps with the claimed range of between 10.3 and 11.0, since Hirai et al. disclose that polyisoprene latex emulsions are notoriously well known to be stable at pH values between pH 8 and 13.5 and to have included ethoxylated cetyl/stearyl alcohol in the emulsion taught by Stevenson et al. and Hirai et al. since Grollier et al. disclose that it is notoriously well known to include an emulsifying agent such as ethoxylated cetyl/stearyl alcohol (as evidenced by Watkins et al) in compositions comprising a liquid polyisoprene latex emulsion as taught by Grollier et al.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have maintained the polyisoprene latex emulsion of Stevenson et al. at a pH of between pH 8 and 13.5, a range that overlaps with the claimed range of between 10.3 and 11.0, since Hirai et al. disclose that polyisoprene latex emulsions are notoriously well known to be stable at pH values between pH 8 and 13.5 and to have included ethoxylated cetyl/stearyl alcohol in the emulsion taught by Stevenson et al. and Hirai et al. since Grollier et al. disclose that it is notoriously well known to include an emulsifying agent such as ethoxylated cetyl/stearyl alcohol (as evidenced by Watkins et al.) in compositions comprising a liquid polyisoprene latex emulsion as taught by Grollier et al.

In regard to claims 2, 4 and 5, Stevenson et al. teach that the thiuram compound is tetrabenzyl thiuram disulfide (col. 4, lines 65-68, col. 2, lines 15-22 and col. 5, lines 30-68). Stevenson et al. teach that the tetrabenzyl thiuram disulfide is present in an amount of 0.1 to 1.5 parts per part of the dihydrocarbyl xanthogen polysulfide (col. 4, lines 65-68), which is present in an amount of 0.5-6 parts by weight per 100 parts by weight of the rubber (i.e. polyisoprene) (col. 3, line 35 and col. 4, lines 28-31). Therefore, the range claimed in claim 4 of 0.45-0.75 parts thiuram compound per 100 parts polyisoprene falls within the range taught by Stevenson et al., as does the value claimed in claim 5 of 0.6 parts thiuram compound per 100 parts polyisoprene.

In regard to claims 9 and 10, Stevenson et al. teach that the xanthogen compound is present in an amount of 0.5-6 parts by weight per 100 parts by weight of the rubber (i.e. polyisoprene) (col. 3, line 35 and col. 4, lines 28-31).

In regard to claim 17, Stevenson et al., Hirai et al. and Grollier et al. teach the emulsion as discussed above. While Stevenson et al. fail to explicitly teach that the liquid polyisoprene

latex emulsion has a pH in the range of between about 10.5 and about 10.8, Hirai et al. disclose a stable liquid polyisoprene latex emulsion (col. 2, lines 19-24) comprising an emulsifying agent (col. 5, lines 56-59) and having a pH between 8 and 13.5 (Hirai et al. disclose that the emulsion is stable between pH 8 and 13.5). Therefore, one of ordinary skill in the art would have recognized to have maintained the polyisoprene latex emulsion of Stevenson et al. at a pH of between about 8 and about 13.5, a range that overlaps with the claimed range of between about 10.5 and about 10.8, since Hirai et al. disclose that polyisoprene latex emulsions are notoriously well known to be stable at pH values between pH 8 and 13.5.

In regard to claim 18, Stevenson et al., Hirai et al. and Grollier et al. teach the emulsion as discussed above. Hirai et al., furthermore disclose that the emulsion comprises a surfactant as a component of the emulsifying agent (col. 5, lines 56-67 and col. 16, line 32). Therefore, one of ordinary skill in the art would have recognized to have included a surfactant in the composition of Stevenson et al., Hirai et al. and Grollier et al. since surfactants are notoriously well known components of emulsifying agents as taught by Hirai et al.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have included a surfactant in the composition of Stevenson et al., Hirai et al. and Grollier et al. since surfactants are notoriously well known components of emulsifying agents as taught by Hirai et al.

In regard to claim 19, Stevenson et al. teach a thin film polyisoprene article (col. 3, lines 13-16 and 19-25) made from a composition comprising a liquid polyisoprene latex emulsion comprising a liquid latex (col. 5, lines 6-12), sulfur (col. 4, lines 35-37), a thiuram compound (col. 3, lines 65-66) and a dihydrocarbyl xanthogen polysulfide (corresponding to the xanthogen

compound as claimed) as a rubber-curing agent (col. 4, lines 3-7). Since Stevenson et al. teach that the rubber that is used, which is preferably synthetic polyisoprene, may be in latex or dry form (col. 5, lines 6-12), the latex taught by Stevenson is a liquid polyisoprene latex emulsion. Since Stevenson et al. teach that the xanthogen compound is a curing agent, Stevenson et al. teach a polyisoprene article that is made by curing a composition comprising a liquid polyisoprene latex emulsion comprising a liquid latex, sulfur, a thiuram compound and a xanthogen compound, but note that the recitation "made by curing a composition" is a method limitation that has not been given patentable weight since the method of forming the article is not germane to the issue of the patentability of the article itself. Since Stevenson et al. does not teach the use of a coagulant, Stevenson et al. teach that the composition is cured in the absence of a coagulant.

Stevenson et al. fail to explicitly teach that the liquid polyisoprene latex emulsion is stable, that the liquid polyisoprene latex emulsion has a pH of between 10.3 and 11.0 and that the liquid polyisoprene latex emulsion comprises ethoxylated cetyl/stearyl alcohol.

Hirai et al., however, disclose a stable liquid polyisoprene latex emulsion (col. 2, lines 19-24) comprising an emulsifying agent (col. 5, lines 56-59) and having a pH between 8 and 13.5 (Hirai et al. disclose that the emulsion is stable between pH 8 and 13.5) (col. 6, lines 7-9). Furthermore, Grollier et al. disclose a composition comprising an anionic polyisoprene latice (the liquid latex as claimed) (col. 1, lines 61-63, col. 2, lines 13-18 and col. 21, lines 57-59) and an oxyethyleneated cetyl-stearyl alcohol (corresponding to the ethoxylated cetyl/stearyl alcohol as claimed) (col. 14, lines 6-7). Grollier et al. disclose that emulsifying agents may be added to the

composition of Grollier et al. (col. 11, line 35). Ethoxylated cetyl/stearyl alcohol is an emulsifying agent as evidenced by Watkins et al. (see col. 4, lines 14-18 of Watkins et al.).

Therefore, one of ordinary skill in the art would have recognized to have maintained the polyisoprene latex emulsion of Stevenson et al. at a pH of between pH 8 and 13.5, a range that overlaps with the claimed range of between 10.3 and 11.0, since Hirai et al. disclose that polyisoprene latex emulsions are notoriously well known to be stable at pH values between pH 8 and 13.5 and to have included ethoxylated cetyl/stearyl alcohol in the emulsion taught by Stevenson et al. and Hirai et al. since Grollier et al. disclose that it is notoriously well known to include an emulsifying agent such as ethoxylated cetyl/stearyl alcohol (as evidenced by Watkins et al.) in compositions comprising a liquid polyisoprene latex emulsion as taught by Grollier et al.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have maintained the polyisoprene latex emulsion of Stevenson et al. at a pH of between pH 8 and 13.5, a range that overlaps with the claimed range of between 10.3 and 11.0, since Hirai et al. disclose that polyisoprene latex emulsions are notoriously well known to be stable at pH values between pH 8 and 13.5 and to have included ethoxylated cetyl/stearyl alcohol in the emulsion taught by Stevenson et al. and Hirai et al. since Grollier et al. disclose that it is notoriously well known to include an emulsifying agent such as ethoxylated cetyl/stearyl alcohol (as evidenced by Watkins et al.) in compositions comprising a liquid polyisoprene latex emulsion as taught by Grollier et al.

10 Claims 6-8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Stevenson et al. (U.S. 5,254,635), in further view of Hirai et al., and in further view of Grollier et al. and in view of Stevenson (US 4,695,609).

Stevenson et al. ('635), Hirai et al. and Grollier et al. teach the emulsion as discussed above.

In regard to claim 6, Stevenson et al. ('635), Hirai et al. and Grollier et al. fail to teach that the emulsion further comprises zinc dibenzyldithiocarbamate. Stevenson ('609), however, discloses that dithiocarbamates are widely used as accelerators and curing agents for rubber goods (col. 1, lines 11-25). Stevenson ('609) discloses that zinc dibenzyldithiocarbamate as a dithiocarbamate additive for latex formulations (col. 1, lines 15-19 and col. 8, lines 50-68). Therefore, one of ordinary skill in the art would have recognized to have used zinc dibenzyldithiocarbamate as an accelerator or curing agent of the emulsion of Stevenson et al. ('635), Hirai et al. and Grollier et al. since zinc dibenzyldithiocarbamate is a notoriously well known accelerator and curing agent for latex formulations as taught by Stevenson ('609).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have used zinc dibenzyldithiocarbamate as an accelerator or curing agent of the emulsion of Stevenson et al. ('635), Hirai et al. and Grollier et al. since zinc dibenzyldithiocarbamate is a notoriously well known accelerator and curing agent for latex formulations as taught by Stevenson ('609).

In regard to claims 7 and 8, Stevenson et al. ('635), Hirai et al. and Grollier et al. fail to teach the claimed zinc dibenzyldithiocarbamate amounts claimed in claims 7 and 8 of the instant application. Stevenson ('609), however, disclose that 0.2 parts zinc dibenzyldithiocarbamate are

added to 100 parts latex (col. 8, line 68). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have adjusted the amount of zinc dibenzyldithiocarbamate added to the emulsion to 0.3-0.5 parts (including 0.4 parts) per 100 parts by weight of polyisoprene in order to achieve the optimal acceleration or curing results depending on the particular desired end user result through routine experimentation, since it has been held that discovering an optimum value of a result effective variable involves only routine skill in the art in the absence of unexpected results. *In re Boesch*, 617 F.2d 272, 205 USPQ 215 (CCPA 1980).

ANSWERS TO APPLICANT'S ARGUMENTS

11. On page 6 of Amdt. D, Applicant argues that the "Office Action Does Not Sufficiently Identify 'Watkins et al.'". Applicant cites 37 CFR 1.104(d) for support that the number, date, and names of patentees of any domestic patent cited by Examiner must be stated *in the Office Action*, but 37 CFR 1.104(d) does not require that these things be provided in the Office Action. The number, date, and names of patentees of any domestic patent cited by Examiner are provided in the PTO Form 892. The required information for the Watkins et al. patent was included in the PTO Form 892 that was included with the Office Action mailed December 12, 2003 (Paper 11). Applicant should be familiar with the PTO Form 892 since it is discussed in the section of the MPEP that is cited by Applicant as part of Applicant's arguments for why the "Office Action Does Not Sufficiently Identify 'Watkins et al.'", i.e. MPEP 707.05(a). Applicant has not stated that the PTO Form 892 was not included with Paper 11, and the "PTO-892" attachment box at the bottom of the Office Action Summary Form of Paper 11 (PTOL-326) is checked, so Applicant should have received the PTO Form 892 included with Paper 11. The information for

the Watkins et al. patent that Applicant requires is provided on the PTO Form 892 that was included with Paper 11. Regardless of when and where the breakdown in the provision of the copy of the Watkins et al. patent to Applicant occurred, the PTO Form 892 that was included with Paper 11 gave Applicant the necessary information to obtain the patent. The number of the Watkins et al. patent is US 5,098,472.

12. Applicant's arguments in regard to the rejections of claims 1, 2, 4-11, 17 and 18 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) made of record in Paper 11 have been fully considered but are not persusive. Applicant's statement that "none of the[] references teach or even imply a stable emulsion" on page 9 of Admt. D is incorrect; as stated in paragraph 11 of Paper 11, Hirai et al. disclose a stable liquid polyisoprene latex emulsion. Applicant argues that Hirai et al "fails to recognize the criticality of pH in making a stable liquid polyisoprene emulsion", but this is not true because as explicitly stated in paragraph 11 of Paper 11, Hirai et al. disclose that the emulsion is stable between pH 8 and 13.5 (col. 6, lines 7-9). Applicant argues that "[n]one of the references relied on in the Office Action suggest that pH is important, let alone critical, to making a stable liquid polyisoprene emulsion", but this is not true because as explicitly stated in paragraph 11 of Paper 11, Hirai et al. disclose that the emulsion is stable between pH 8 and 13.5 (col. 6, lines 7-9).

Applicant argues that the pH range of 8.0-13.5 taught by Hirai et al. is "not enabling for the specific pH range indicated in this application". Presuming Applicant intends to argue that the pH range of 8.0-13.5 taught by Hirai et al. does not anticipate the range claimed by Applicant, MPEP 2131.03 requires a showing of evidence of unexpected results for *consideration* that "the narrow range is not disclosed with 'sufficient specificity' and is insufficient to establish anticipation". MPEP 2131.03 states

> If the claims are directed to a narrow range, the reference teaches a broad range, and there is evidence of unexpected results within the claimed narrow range, depending on the other facts of the case, it may be reasonable to conclude that the narrow range is not disclosed with "sufficient specificity" to constitute an anticipation of the claims.

While Applicant does generally argue that the pH range claimed in claim 1 yields unexpected results, Applicant has not met the burden on Applicant to establish that these results are unexpected and significant in that the evidence relied upon does not establish "that the differences in results are in fact unexpected and unobvious and of both statistical and practical significance" *Ex parte Gelles*, 22 USPQ2d 1318, 1319 (Bd. Pat. App. & Inter. 1992). Furthermore, the claimed invention has not been compared with the closest prior art which is commensurate in scope with the claims as required by MPEP 716.02(b).

Conclusion

13. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

14. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Walter B. Aughenbaugh whose telephone number is 571-272-1488. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Thursday from 9:00am to 6:00pm and on altemate Fridays from 9:00am to 5:00pm

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Harold Pyon, can be reached on 571-272-1498. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see http://pair-direct.uspto.gov. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Walter B. Aughenbaugh
05/27/04 WBA.

HAROLD PYON
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
1772

5/28/04